

Thus far, I have only addressed the problems with the process surrounding this bill. The problems with the policy are too numerous to name here, but I want to highlight some of the more outrageous:

It does not improve our energy security and does nothing to promote renewable energy sources. This bill funnels billions of dollars into the oil and gas industries, making us more dependent than ever on foreign sources for these resources. In fact, only 1/3 of the subsidies in this bill go toward promoting clean, renewable energy that we can find right here in the U.S.A. The policy before us today is stuck in the 20th century and does not take advantage of the advances in technology in the clean and renewable energy arena, and prefers to favor older, dirtier methods to generate our energy supply.

It does not protect our water from contaminants that can cause serious health problems. This bill actually protects MTBE (methyl tertiary butyl ether) producers from product liability suits. MTBE has been proven to be harmful to our health, yet this bill leaves the taxpayers to clean up the mess and lets the producers off scot-free. California, more than any other state has been affected by MTBE. In some cities, many of the drinking water wells are now unusable because of MTBE contamination.

It exempts the oil and gas construction activities from Clean Water Act controls on stormwater runoff. I introduced a motion to instruct conferees on H.R. 6 that would have struck language that gave oil and gas construction activities a free pass from controlling their stormwater runoff. This exemption makes them the only construction activity that does not have to take measures to ensure that runoff from their construction sites does not pollute our lakes, streams and rivers. Unfortunately, my motion did not pass and this harmful handout to the oil and gas industry remains.

It does not address the problems that caused the California Energy Crisis of 2000–2001. This bill does nothing to prevent the kind of market manipulation that caused energy prices to skyrocket in California. Even the most conservative estimates indicate that California lost over \$9 billion to this manipulation

by energy companies. This bill leaves California—and the rest of the Nation—without any protections against market manipulation.

It is for these reasons and many more that I cannot and will not support this awful bill. This bill has been bought and paid for by the energy industry—mostly the oil and gas industries. Unfortunately, all Americans will pay the price for this bad bill.

#### ENERGY POLICY ACT OF 2003

**HON. BARBARA LEE**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 18, 2003*

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, the Energy Policy Act of 2003 that unfortunately passed this afternoon is a failure in process and policy.

The Republican majority squandered a historic opportunity to forge a truly bipartisan consensus that would meet the nation's immediate needs while expanding conservation and encouraging renewable energy to wean us from foreign oil.

The Republican majority has steamrolled concerns, facts, and opposition, all to benefit powerful energy industries at the expense of American people.

This bill not only fails to promote a healthy energy policy, it will also cost the American people over \$140 billion over the next decade.

These costs include industry subsidies, tax breaks, authorizations for new government spending, and mandates that increase consumer prices for gasoline and electricity.

This legislation continues the Bush administration's rollbacks of environmental protections while steamrolling the public interest.

It was written for big energy companies by big energy companies to benefit big energy companies, with a \$16 billion package of tax breaks and production subsidies for the oil, coal, and nuclear industries.

Mr. Speaker, this bill threatens more than the pocketbooks of the American people, it also poses an imminent threat to our Nation's air quality, drinking water, and public lands.

We see this threat to our public health most clearly in my home State of California.

MTBE, a known cause of cancer, is leaking out of storage tanks, but this bill shields MTBE producers and oil companies from product liability lawsuits and pays them \$2 billion.

This gasoline additive, intended to reduce air pollution, has contaminated groundwater supplies in numerous California communities.

In addition to weakening clean water protections, this bill will crack open the door for offshore drilling by shifting control of projects off California's coastline toward the Federal Government.

It also requires a faster permitting process and the easing of some environmental rules to promote energy development on public lands.

This bill will cause catastrophic harm to the public health and the public interest.

This bill is a total failure based on tax breaks and subsidies alone.

What makes this bill even more difficult to stomach is the possibility of what could have been.

This bill does not, for example, provide a clear direction for the development of the electricity grid.

This bill also does not encourage the U.S. car industry to manufacture vehicles that consume less fuel and produce fewer pollutants.

Additionally, this bill does not significantly encourage energy conservation and it does nothing to wean this country from oil and gas imports.

Tragically, America needs a new energy policy. Just not this one.

We need an energy bill that would remove subsidies and market distortions.

We need a progressive energy policy that would invest in energy efficiency and renewable energy sources instead of fossil fuels. Such a policy would create four times as many jobs without adding to the deficit, burdening taxpayers, or poisoning our air and water.

I strongly opposed this bill because of its complete failure to protect America's environment, protect America's health, and protect American taxpayers.